

US and State of Louisiana Settlement with Firestone Polymers to Bring Cleaner Air to Southwest Louisiana Communities

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Contact Information

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WASHINGTON – (Feb. 22, 2022) The United States, together with the State of Louisiana, announced today that the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana has approved the consent decree resolving alleged violations of the Clean Air Act and several other federal and state environmental laws at the company’s synthetic rubber manufacturing facility in Sulfur, Louisiana. Under the terms of the settlement, Firestone will install equipment controls to reduce emissions of hazardous air pollutants, fund ambient air monitoring system upgrades, and pay a total of \$3.35 million in civil penalties.

“This settlement requires Firestone to take concrete steps to reduce emissions of air pollutants from its manufacturing facility in Sulfur, Louisiana,” **said Larry Starfield, Acting Assistant Administrator of EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance.** “This will result in cleaner air for communities in Southwest Louisiana, particularly for communities that have suffered a historically disproportionate burden from pollution.”

“We are always glad to work with our federal partners, the USDOJ and USEPA, to resolve violations,” **said LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown.** “We plan to use this penalty and the beneficial environmental project funds from this consent decree to further enhance the environment in Louisiana.”

The consent decree requires several actions from Firestone, including meeting emissions limits, operating and maintenance requirements, equipment controls, limiting hazardous air pollutants from facility dryers, conducting inspections of heat exchangers, installing controls and monitors on covered flares, and installing flaring instrumentation and monitoring systems. After being notified of the violations but prior to the consent decree being lodged, Firestone took other compliance measures, including installing and operating a regenerative thermal oxidizer system to receive waste gases from dryers, reducing n-hexane solvent concentrations and inspecting and testing heat exchangers.

The Department of Justice, on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and co-plaintiff Louisiana Department of Environment Quality (LDEQ), filed a complaint and lodged the consent decree in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana on September 30, 2021. The complaint alleged that the facility emitted excess amounts of pollutants including

nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and hazardous air pollutants including 1,3-butadiene, n-hexane, styrene, formaldehyde, methanol, and others and failed to comply with requirements related to equipment such as dryers, cooling towers, and flares; leak detection and repair; mechanical integrity; and monitoring and reporting. The complaint also asserted violations of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act; the Pollution Prevention Act; and Louisiana state air pollution control requirements.

As part of the consent decree, Firestone will pay a civil penalty of \$2,098,678.50 to the United States and \$1,251,321.50 to LDEQ for a total of \$3,350,000. Firestone will also complete a Beneficial Environmental Project in Louisiana by funding ambient air monitoring system upgrades in several locations in Southwest Louisiana.

To read the Consent Decree: <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/firestone-polymers-llc-settlement>

For more about the Clean Air Act: <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-air-act>